Mr. President, our job in this body right now for all of us

is to fight and win the war that radical Islam terrorists have declared

upon us.

As I see it, Congress has three choices. First, Congress can and

should provide the money it needs to support the troops. That is the

only proper choice. There is money in this supplemental for additional

mine-resistant armored protection vehicles--vehicles the Army reports

will reduce casualties by 70 percent. Each day this Congress neglects

to fund the troops and pass a bill that can be signed into law is an

additional day our troops are without that protection.

Second, if you want to stop this war, Congress can vote to cut off

funding. However, doing so would tell the troops that even though 77

Members of this body said we should fight this war to keep America

safe, we would now be telling all of our brave men and women in Iraq,

their families, and the families of those who gave their lives, we did

not mean it, that we did not want to finish this job, and that when the

going gets tough, America gets going--out. We will tell America we are

no longer concerned about keeping our homeland safe from a new 9/11,

about denying al-Qaida the safe haven it has declared it is seeking in

Iraq to prepare for new attacks on America. While that choice is deadly

wrong, it is an honest choice under the constitutional power given to

the Congress.

Third, and most deplorable, Congress is delaying the funds by forcing

vote after vote, while attempting to score political points, and trying

to micromanage the war, even though war management is the President's

constitutional responsibility.

Most sadly, this is the course of action the Democratic leadership

has chosen--a course that will result in ``death by a thousand cuts.''

Those who are attempting to end the war precipitously, politically,

because they think it will score them seats in Congress or perhaps even

the White House, are putting polls and politics ahead of our national

security. Democratic leaders have stated they intend to pick up seats

as a result of what they have referred to as a lost war. These comments

were not just broadcast here in the United States; this talk about war

loss was picked up and broadcast gleefully by al-Jazeera to our enemies

and the world.

The Los Angeles Times has reported a top House Democrat has said: Our

goal is to keep giving them--Republicans--votes on Iraq.

The article goes on to say:

I am sure our troops in the field appreciate very much that some of

the Democratic leadership are working to win the war--not the war

against our sworn enemies blowing up our troops and killing Iraqi

children who rely on

our protection but against fellow Americans in coming elections. Where

is their strategy to win, to leave Iraq a stable and safe country?

As I have said, the other side's leadership, by embracing a policy of

repeated votes and delaying funding, is denying our troops the

resources they need. Their enemy should be al-Qaida and its murderous

insurgents, not the President and Republican opponents.

Substituting Congress for General Petraeus's leadership and telling

him how to run a war from 8,000 miles away is a disaster. General

Petraeus is executing a new plan, a plan essentially recommended by the

Baker-Hamilton Iraq Study Group, which last fall our colleagues on the

other side of the aisle said we should follow. But now even if some

generals in Congress think they are smarter than General Petraeus and

can devise in legislation a better plan, which I strongly doubt, I am

very doubtful they can adjust that plan to conditions on the

battlefield. This is a sad reflection of how vested the Democratic

leaders are in defeat--defeat for President Bush but defeat for our

troops and our safety in Iraq.

Congress attempts to put artificial political timetables on the

management of the war and does nothing to accomplish the mission. The

Baker-Hamilton commission explicitly rejected timetables for

withdrawal, because they recognized--the bipartisan group recognized--

it was a disaster, and many Democratic leaders have previously stated a

legislative timetable, laying out this strategy in legislation, is

absolutely unacceptable. What the political timetable does is give al-

Qaida the encouragement and information it needs to know when and where

and how to attack our troops.

This January, in open session, leaders of our intelligence community

came before the Senate Intelligence Committee to answer questions about

establishing a political withdrawal and the consensus was alarming.

Mr. President, the intelligence community said withdrawing

forces before we can provide security will result in chaos: more

killing among Iraqis, an al-Qaida safe haven, and a possible region wide

declaration of war.

We need a political solution in Iraq, not in Washington, to allow the

leaders in the national unity government to come together, but to get

that, we need to repel the terrorists, we need to rebuild the Iraqi

security forces. What won't help General Petraeus is direction from

armchair generals in Congress.

What I would say to those who want to direct the war is: If you want

to run it, you will own it. When a newly revitalized al-Qaida carries

out a renewed 9/11 scale attack, you will own that one, too.

Mr. President, hundreds of thousands of soldiers and their families

at home will remember that. I suggest we support our troops.

As my colleagues know, I hail proudly from the Show-Me-State.

If all of the rhetoric in Washington about supporting the troops is

true and I suspect it is, then I suggest that the Congress show our

troops that we do support them, get them the funds and give them a

chance to succeed.

Comments like ``The war is lost'' do not help our troops, but they do

embolden the enemy.

Our actions should inspire our troops and the millions of Iraqi

citizens who actually trust that Americans will not embrace defeat.

Our action should not be one that inspires al-Qaida and the murderous

insurgents.

We should not pass legislation that provides our enemy the clear path

to their victory, a victory which some in this body have already

awarded them.